

The ROAD REPORT

A quarterly mailer for civic organizations

Carolann Wicks Named DelDOT's New Secretary



On February 1, 2006, Carolann Wicks became the eighth Secretary of the Delaware Department of Transportation. With more than 23 years with DelDOT, Ms. Wicks most recently occupied a dual role as Chief Engineer and Director of the Division of Transportation Solutions. In these capacities, she was responsible for project development. Her signature marked the final stamp of approval for project plans and designs.

At Secretary Wicks' installation ceremony, Governor Ruth Ann Minner praised her saying, "her vast knowledge of the department and its operations makes her uniquely qualified to lead this agency as we tackle the financial challenges ahead and deliver an efficient, high quality transportation system to the residents of Delaware. I am confident that Secretary Wicks will carry on the department's mission, as well as bring my vision for a Livable Delaware to life. And, I thank her for accepting the challenge of leadership and service to the State of Delaware."

Ms. Wicks is a member of the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Standing Committee on Highways and the AASHTO Transportation Education Management Institute Steering Committee. She is also a member of the American Association of State Highway Engineers. She is a licensed engineer and has a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and a master's degree in public administration, both from the University of Delaware. She lives in Townsend with her husband, Ken and their daughter.

Upon accepting her new position as DelDOT Secretary, Ms. Wicks said, "As transportation professionals, we are very much aware of the critical role transportation plays in the success of our state. The services we provide, the projects we deliver and the valuable assets we maintain are all essential to a thriving economy and a great quality of life for our citizens. Public service is a very noble profession, and I am very proud to serve as Delaware's eighth Secretary of Transportation.

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DelDOT Since 1983

- Carolann Wicks began as an entry-level engineer in 1983
- DelDOT added DART in 1989 and DMV in 2004.
- The number of DelDOT employees increased from 1,200 to 2,600.
- In 1980 the average annual vehicle miles traveled was 4.2 billion, compared to 9 billion today.
- Major accomplishments: Expanded commuter rail and fixed route service; Built new DMV facilities; reorganized the Department to better serve customers; took on Delaware E-ZPass; and, completed Route 1, Route 896, the C & D Canal Bridge and the Newark Train station.

Bob Taylor Announced as New Chief Engineer and Director of Transportation Solutions



Delaware Department of Transportation Secretary Carolann Wicks announced on Feb. 10 the selection of Bob Taylor as the Department's Chief Engineer and Director of Transportation Solutions.

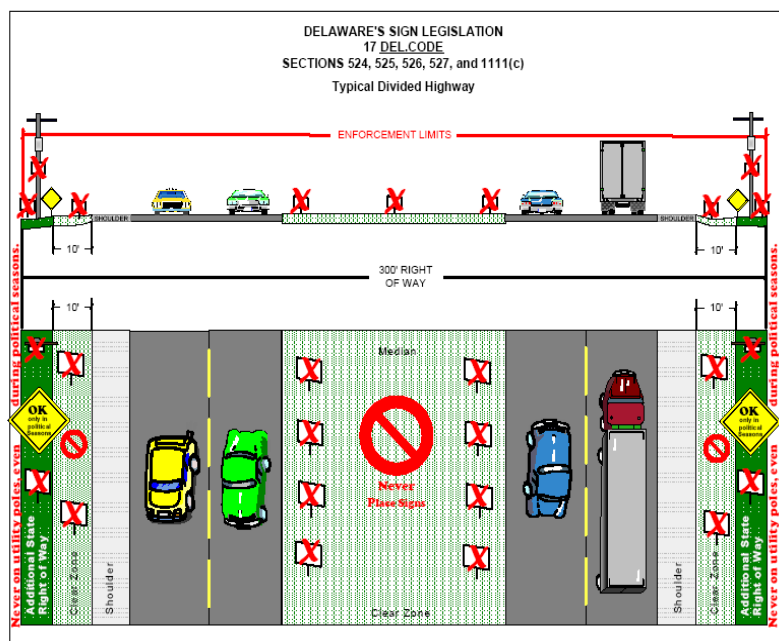
Bob began his long career with the Department in June 1973, working in Construction and Systems Planning before becoming Chief of Transit Plans and Operations in the former Division of Transportation. He was appointed DART

Administrator in 1982, and DART Deputy Director in 1994. He has also served since 1996, as Assistant Director of Engineering Administration, Design Support, and most recently Assistant Director of Engineering Support in Transportation Solutions. Bob's extensive knowledge and experience, and dedication, have kept him involved in numerous Department-wide initiatives and make him an excellent choice for this challenging position.

Bob has a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Virginia Tech. He lives in Dover with his wife Kathy. He has two daughters and a son-in-law, and one granddaughter.

Sign Law Is Still Intact; Enforcement Continues

In June of 2005, the General Assembly amended the Clear Zone law giving DeIDOT the authority to remove all illegal signs/obstructions in the Clear Zone. This includes unauthorized signs on utility poles anywhere in the Right-of-Way (ROW). Illegal signs in the ROW outside the Clear Zone, are also subject to immediate removal, except for the period 30 days prior to and 30 days after an election, but only in the affected election district. Sign owners are still subject to a \$25 per sign fine and a \$15 per sign recovery fee. DeIDOT is allowed to dispose of the signs after 30 days, although fines will still be levied.



Parents Are Key to Reducing Childhood Pedestrian Injuries

Pedestrian and bicycle accident figures over the last four years confirm that better marked intersections, bike lanes and other improvements are helping increase safety for Delaware walkers and bicyclists. The number of pedestrians injured in accidents declined from 286 in 2001 to 222 in 2003.

Parents give their children more credit for judgment than they actually have, according to the Transportation Research Board. Researchers found that parents are overly optimistic about their children's ability to deal with difficult traffic situations, particularly for children five to 12 years of age.

As with most safety behaviors, effective learning means practice. Parents and caregivers need to rehearse and reinforce pedestrian safety rules so that they sink into the child's active, playful mind. This is a time consuming process, but the benefits are well worth the effort. Following is a list of teaching tips:

- Teach your child to stop at the curb, edge of the road, or at the outside of a parked car.
- If a parked car is involved, have them verify that the car isn't about to move by making contact with the driver.

- Then show your child how to sharply turn his head and eyes left-right-left while searching and listening for traffic.

- After all cars have passed, have them look left-right-left again before crossing. Remember to keep looking in all directions as you cross the road. Only after this proper search can the child cross.

- Rehearse this walk smart behavior as often as possible until you feel the safety message is secure in the child's mind.

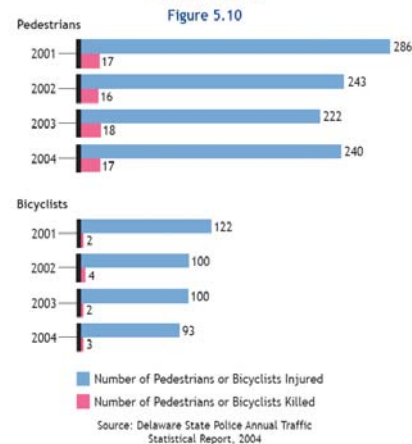
Other important safety practices include: walking directly across the street-not diagonally; looking over your shoulder for turning traffic at intersections; following traffic safety practices in parking lots; and always being a role model for your child.

As we become more pedestrian-oriented, it is important that pedestrian safety becomes recognized and that road safety rules become habits for pedestrians and users of roadways.

For more information or a copy of the Walk Smart booklet on pedestrian safety, contact the University of Delaware, Cooperative Extension at (302) 856-7303.

Thanks to the Office of Highway Safety for providing safety information.

Pedestrian/Bicyclists Involved in Accidents 2001-2004
Figure 5.10



DeIDOT in the Community

At a visit to Towne Point Elementary School in Dover, on Wednesday, March 15 Public Relations Staff read "Katy and the Big Snow" to three Kindergarten classes. The students then got a chance to see a real snow plow, thanks to Ron Galeski and Eddie Sard of DeIDOT's Magnolia Maintenance Yard.



Photo by James Perno

Bicycle Safety Tips

Delaware law requires all children under age 16 whether operating a bike or riding as a passenger to wear a bike helmet. A properly worn helmet is extremely effective in reducing the chance of head injuries to riders.

Be Visible—Wear bright clothing or attach a bike safety flag to the back of your bicycle. Avoid riding at night when being seen is more difficult. If riding at night, there must be a front white light and rear red reflectors on bicycles. Kids under 12 should limit riding to daylight hours.

Follow the Rules of the Road—Ride with the flow of traffic, use appropriate signals to make other motorists aware of intentions to stop or turn, and obey the same stop signs and traffic signals that motorized vehicles do.

Watch Out for Road Hazards—Ride on smooth shoulders or sidewalks when possible. Watch out for drainage grates and loose gravel on roads that could result in loss of control of the bike. Don't weave in and out of parked cars or driveways, making it hard to be seen by other motorists.



DelDOT Participates in National Work Zone Safety Awareness Campaign for the Second Year

National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week (April 2-8) is a national campaign scheduled for the first or second week of April each year. The American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA) partnered with the Federal Highway Administration and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials to annually conduct this event. Now in its seventh year, this year's campaign marks the second year that the Delaware Department of Transportation is taking an active part in this most important campaign. The focus is to bring to the attention of the motoring public and the media the fact of those injured or killed

senselessly in work zones each year.

We take for granted that most of us work in a safe, comfortable environment. But we need to remember that there are mothers, fathers, friends and other members of our communities who are working near vehicles speeding by carelessly and at excessive speeds. This year's campaign will focus on those DelDOT employees who have been involved in some sort of work zone incident. Nationally over 52,000 people were injured and over 1000-killed last year. This breaks down to one work zone fatality every seven hours and one work zone injury every 15 minutes.

Make Sure Your Mailbox Meets State Standards

Most of the subdivision streets have public Right-of-Way 5-feet to 10-feet behind the paved roadway. Even though all property owners maintain this right-of-way as part of their yard as required by the county regulation and also for aesthetics, all of the mailboxes are within this right-of-way, behind the curb or at the edge of the roadway.

Yes, there are mailboxes springing up throughout the state that are not in compliance with state law. According to Delaware's mailbox regulations contained in the "Standards and Regulations for Access to State Highways" manual, there are some mailboxes that are illegal. Following is an excerpt from the manual explaining what is and is not legal:

▲ No mailbox...will be allowed to exist on the highway rights-of-way if it interferes with the safety of the traveling public or the function, maintenance or operation of the highway system. The phrase "...interferes with the safety of the traveling public or the function, maintenance or operation of the highway system," refers to the idea that a mailbox and its supporting post, if struck by a vehicle, should break off, minimizing the potential for severe damage to the vehicle and its occupants. Mailboxes encased in bricks, or otherwise "toughened," may serve the desire of their owners, but could result in needlessly severe injuries or fatalities in accidents.

▲ Mailboxes shall be of light sheet metal or plastic construction.

▲ A single 4-inch x 4-inch (square) or 4 1/2-inch diameter (round) wooden post, or metal post with a strength no greater than a 2-inch diameter standard-strength steel pipe, and embedded no more than 24-inches into the ground, will be acceptable as a mailbox support.

▲ Mailbox supports shall not be set in concrete.

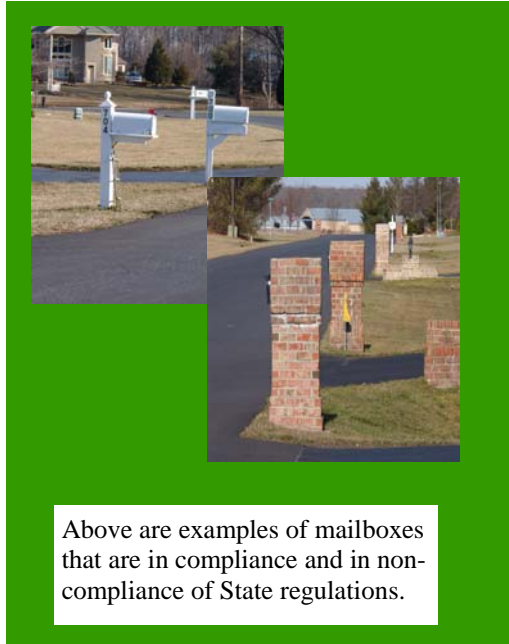
▲ Any mailbox that is found to violate the intent of this regulation shall be removed by the postal patron upon written notification by DelDOT.

The majority of the developers and builders are aware of these requirements and the Department of Transportation has been relying on the developers to properly inform the property owners of them.

Also, any damages to DelDOT snow removal equipment or any other State-owned property will be assumed by the owner of the non-conforming mailbox. By contrast, if DelDOT accidentally damages a conforming mailbox, the owner will be compensated for damages.

Before accepting subdivision streets into the State's maintenance system, property owners with brick or other non-conforming mailboxes will be notified that these mailboxes are not legal and to remove them as soon as possible. In addition, developments seeking acceptance for State maintenance by DelDOT will not be accepted unless all mailboxes in the community are in compliance with State regulations.

The "Standards and Regulations for Access to State Highways" manual, also known as the "Entrance Manual," can be found in its entirety on DelDOT's Web site, www.deldot.gov. From the Home page click on *Publications and Forms*; the manual can be found under the heading *Manuals*.



Above are examples of mailboxes that are in compliance and in non-compliance of State regulations.

Safe Routes to Schools Teams DelDOT with Schools

DelDOT officials are paving the way for Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS), a program that will enable DelDOT to work with schools to encourage children to walk and bicycle to school safely. A draft of the SRTS guidelines is available on DelDOT's Web site for public review and comment through March 31. The public is encouraged to comment in writing to Erin Fasano, Project Planner, Division of Planning, Delaware Department of Transportation, P. O. Box 778, Dover, DE 19903.

"Because of the growing prevalence of childhood obesity, the early on-set of Type II diabetes, and other related factors that contribute to heart disease, I would like to see this program succeed," said Project Planner, Erin Fasano. "We plan to partner with the American Heart Association, schools and other organizations, once we get up and running."

The program is expected to become official mid-spring.

Construction Report

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Fax: 302-739-2092
Email: dot-public-relations@state.de.us



New Castle County

SR 41 Lancaster Pike, South of Schoolhouse Rd. to North of Valley Rd.; Single lane

I-95 NB & SB at bridge over Rt. 72 near Newark Service Area; Lane closures and traffic switch

Rt. 13 EB & WB at I-495 bridges; Intermittent lane closures, day

Summit Bridge Rd. and Boyd's Corner Rd./Churchtown Rd. intersection; Lane closures

Kent County

Andrews Lake Rd. btwn Rt. 15 & Chimney Hill Rd; Intermittent lane closures

Barratts Chapel Rd/ Plymouth Rd. from Rt. 13 to McGinnis Pond Rd.; Intermittent lane closures

Mulberrie Point Rd. btwn. Rt. 113 and Old Bowers Beach Rd.; Intermittent lane closures

Sussex County

Mulberry St. from Rt. 16 to Wagamon's Pond; Intermittent lane closures, day

River Rd. btwn Chief Rd. & Layton Davis Rd.; Closed

West Side Dr. & Whiteoak Rd.; Intermittent lane closures, day

Rt. 1 btwn Rehoboth Canal to Rt. 24 NB & SB; Intermittent lane closures, day

Upcoming Public

New Castle County

Mar. 27 Boyd's Corner
Frog Hollow Golf
Course, Middletown

Apr. 10 US 301
Middletown Fire Hall

Apr. 11 US 301
Middletown Fire Hall

Kent County

Mar. 22 Standards and Regulations
for Subdivision Streets and
State Highway Access
DeIDOT Administration Bldg.

Mar. 23 Development Related Improve-
ments Requiring New Rights-of-
Way
DeIDOT Administration Bldg.

Sussex County

Mar. 27 Rt. 26 Atlantic Avenue to
Assawoman Canal
Roxana Fire Hall

Mar. 30 US 113 North/South
Study Working Group
Meeting #12
Georgetown Cheer Center;
5:30-8:30 p.m.

Apr. 19 US 113 North/South Study
Working Group
Meeting #12
Carlisle Fire Hall;
5:30-8:30 p.m.

Report Adverse Road Conditions

Reporting a pothole, drainage issue or other road problems can now be done over the Internet. Visit DeIDOT's Web site at www.deldot.gov and go to "Community Programs and Services", then click on the "Report a Road Condition" heading to file a report with DeIDOT.

Reports received will be routed directly to one of DeIDOT's four district offices for immediate attention.

People without Internet access may continue to call the district offices at the following numbers.

NCC north of I-95, 302-323-1111
NCC south of I-95, 800-324-8379
Kent County, 302-739-1111
Sussex County, 302-855-1111

